

Clinton, Schumer, Nadler Mark 50th Anniversary of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

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WASHINGTON, DC—Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles E. Schumer and Congressman Jerrold Nadler today announced that they will introduce a Congressional resolution honoring the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT) in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the theater's establishment. Citing the theater's numerous accomplishments, global reach, and unparalleled contributions to the artistic community, Clinton, Schumer and Nadler will call on Congress to recognize the AAADT as an American Cultural Ambassador to the World, a pioneer in the world of dance, and a resource for training future generations of dancers and exposing a wide range of communities to the arts.

"The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has touched millions of people around the world during its magnificent fifty-year history. From performing their landmark pieces for Kings and Presidents, to bringing the beauty of their work to our smallest communities, these artists fill New York and this nation with tremendous pride and their theater remains one of our most beloved institutions. May the next fifty years be as prosperous and remarkable for AAADT as the first," said Senator Clinton.

"The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has been a New York cultural touchstone for fifty years, showcasing a vibrant celebration of heritage with pioneering techniques that set the standard for modern dance. New Yorkers are truly blessed to have this globally recognized institution in our own backyard. Here's to fifty more years of innovation and art," Senator Schumer said.

"The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is a cultural treasure not just for New York City, but for the entire country," said Rep. Nadler. "AAADT is rightfully recognized as one of the world's premier modern dance companies. I applaud them on their fiftieth anniversary and look forward to their continuing contributions to the world of dance."

The text of the resolution that will be introduced in the Senate is below.

Resolution

Recognizing the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for 50 years of service to the performing arts.

Whereas Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT) is widely recognized as one of the world's premier modern dance companies;

Whereas AAADT is dedicated to promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience, to preserving the heritage of modern dance, and to bringing modern dance to people around the globe

Whereas, over its 50-year history, AAADT has performed for an estimated 21 million people in 48 States and in 71 countries on 6 continents;

Whereas AAADT tours more than any other performing arts company in the world;

Whereas AAADT's signature work, "Revelations," has been seen by more people across the globe than any other work of dance;

Whereas AAADT performs works by both emerging and established choreographers from throughout the United States and the world;

Whereas AAADT's home in New York City, The Joan Weill Center for Dance, is the largest facility dedicated exclusively to dance in the United States;

Whereas Alvin Ailey, founder of AAADT, received the United Nations Peace Medal in 1982;

Whereas President George W. Bush recognized AAADT and Artistic Director Judith Jamison with the National Medal of Arts in 2001, making AAADT the first dance company to be so honored;

Whereas AAADT has performed for United States Presidents and foreign leaders throughout the company's 50-year history, including performances in 1968 for President Johnson, in 1977 at the inaugural gala for President Carter, in 1993 at the inaugural gala for President Clinton, and in 2003 at the State Dinner honoring President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya;

Whereas over the years AAADT has brought the culture of the United States to audiences around the world with performances at such historic events as the Rio de Janeiro International Arts Festival in 1963, the first Negro Arts Festival in Dakar, Senegal in 1966, the fabled New Year's Eve performance for the Crown Prince of Morocco in 1978, the Paris Centennial performance at the Grand Palais Theatre in 1989, two unprecedented engagements in South Africa in 1997 and 1998, the 1996 and 2002 Olympic Games, the 2005 "Stars of the White Nights" festival in St. Petersburg, Russia, and the 2006 Les étés de la danse de Paris festival in Paris, France;

Whereas AAADT annually provides more than 100,000 young people from diverse cultural, social, and economic backgrounds with the opportunity to explore their creative potential and build their self-esteem through its Arts In Education and Community Programs, which include nine AileyCamps in cities across the United States;

Whereas Ailey II, the junior company to AAADT, reaches more than 69,000 people each year through its inspiring performances and outreach activities while touring to smaller communities in more than 50 North American cities; and

Whereas The Ailey School, accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance, provides the highest quality training consistent with the professional standards of AAADT, including a Certificate Program, a Fellowship Program and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program in conjunction with Fordham University: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate--

(1) recognizes and commends the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for 50 years of service as a cultural ambassador of the United States to the World, by bringing world-class American modern dance to an estimated 21 million people around the globe;

(2) recognizes that the AAADT has been a true pioneer in the world of dance by establishing an extended cultural community that provides dance performances, training, and community programs for all people while using the beauty and humanity of the African-American heritage and other cultures to unite people of all ages, races, and backgrounds; and

(3) recognizes that Ailey II, the prestigious Ailey School and Ailey's extensive and innovative Arts In Education and Community Programs of AAADT train future generations of dancers and choreographers while continuing to expose young people from communities large and small to the arts.

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